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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR NOVEMBER 22, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for November 22 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

RADIKAL / OZGUR GUNDEM: PM Erdogan, who visited Hakkari, Semdinli and Yuksekoval yesterday, conducted studies at these districts under high security measures. PM Erdogan, after visiting the ruins of the houses and businesses, which was bombed on November 1 in Semdinli, went to the place of the bookstore where the November 9 bombing took place.

RADIKAL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Semdinli people reportedly welcomed PM Erdogan, who suddenly decided to visit Hakkari, with banners reading, 'Keep the promises avowed in Diyarbakir', 'if the state kills people, who are we to confide in?', 'No one can black out Roj TV', "Prosecute the murderers", "People should not be shot, and people's voice must be heard." Erdogan, angered by the banners, reportedly reacted, "How come you prepared these banners so fast." Police took away a group of person's banners. PM Erdogan, who addressed a 1000-person group in Semdinli, wanted the youth to remove the banners, because the reason they (GoT) were here was "to address the problems in a firm and unwavering manner." Erdogan later addressed 2000 people in Yuksekova amidst slogans chanted by the audience. Erdogan said that his government will make sure that democratic rights prevail and told the people that his government would solve the Semdinli incident, but people should not give credence to or accept the methods of terrorism anymore.

ZAMAN: According to the daily, the people of the region have trust in the PM Erdogan. PM Erdogan reportedly was able to win people over, and warn them at the same time. The daily reported that PM Erdogan promised tradesmen that the GoT will help them to cover their costs of the damage done to their businesses and shops incurred by the November 1 blast.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Van Chapter of Egitim-Sen (Teacher's Union) attempted to hold a press event when a news article on Zaman daily, whose content was reportedly against the faculty members and the students of the Van Centennial University, was published. Jandarma took strict security measures in the place where people gathered and did not allow people to make the press announcement.

RADIKAL / ZAMAN: Eight faculty members, including two professors, resigned from their posts at Van Centennial University's Medical School. Rector Yucel Askin is currently staying in the hospital of the medical school. Zaman daily cited claims that the doctors working in the hospital were being subjected to pressure (from unspecified sources). Because of the resignations, one of the surgical departments of the University is closed.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The delegation of the Human Rights Association (HRA), which conducted studies in Semdinli, Yuksekoval and Hakkari for four days, generated a report and held a press announcement. According to the report, the people in Hakkari are anxious and uneasy about the situation. The report further said that no official records were found on the alleged five wounded police officers of the November 9 incident in state hospitals or elsewhere. The judicial and the civil administrative authorities reportedly did not start an effective and fast investigative process regarding the security forces' involvement in the incident. The report further complained that there was disproportionate use of force during the police's intervention in incidents of public unrest that followed the November 9 bomb incident.

OZGUR GUNDEM / RADIKAL: The daily claimed that the person killed during an incident of public unrest yesterday in Mersin was 17-year-old. Radikal daily gives the age of the dead as 18. Murat Demir was allegedly shot at close range from a civil police office car yesterday (see press summary 11/21). Allegedly the police took away the empty bullet shells from the street during the night. The papers reported two people, aged 15 and 19, wounded as a result of the incidents.

ZAMAN: The daily reported that two police officers were wounded during the funeral of the person who was killed by unspecified people during protests in Mersin a day before.

OZGUR GUNDEM: People gathered at the graves of Ahmet and Ugur Kaymaz to commemorate the first anniversary of the father

and son's death. The attorney of the Kaymaz family claimed that the court might drag the case out and the prosecution might take many years. Moreover, prosecutors in Turkey reportedly generally tend to take sides with the Jandarma, police and village guards in cases where these security officers are being tried. Citing some other issues, the daily reported the Kaymaz family considering whether there is sufficient cause for them to bring the matter to the attention of the European Court of Human Rights.

ZAMAN: The police reportedly seized 50 units of A-4 explosives during operations conducted in Mersin, according to the announcement of the Mersin Governor Atilla Osmancelebioglu. Two people were detained as a result of the operations.

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